

/311 cont./

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Wheat is cultivated with special emphasis in the areas of Lame, El Cuartel, La Troja, and Vitoncó. It is destined primarily for sale. It is planted along with maize, although there are already clearings intended exclusively for its cultivation. They reap it with knives, rarely with sickles. They do not bind it into sheaves, but make bundles and hang it from the eaves or beams of the house. When dry, they thresh it with wooden clubs /masas/ and separate out its husks by exposing it to the wind. They grind it at once in hydraulic mills built by them themselves and take it to market. They have no sifters to separate the bran.

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[563]

Below /see pp. 25-33 / we present a statistical table on the production of the various species cultivated by 25 families of Mosoco, 8 of Lame, and 15 of San Andrés including that of some mestizos and whites, marked with an asterisk, in order to make some comparisons and to estimate the volume of production. We specify the percentage of the production intended for sale. For obvious reasons, we have omitted the names of the family heads, identifying them solely by number in order. The statistical data correspond to the production in the year 1953.

[124]

[123]

In spite of the fact that this type of investigation presents some difficulties, owing to the reluctance of people to reveal the data on their production they are in general completely trustworthy, since they were collected after a firm interpersonal relationship had been established between the investigator and the person investigated. In addition, they appreciably agree with our observations noted in "General observations" on Páez agriculture.

/312/

Potato cultivation in Mosoco

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We have deliberately omitted anything about the cultivation of potatoes in order to deal with it more thoroughly.

The methods of cultivation differ somewhat from those commonly practiced in the other parcialidades. The soil is prepared in beds that follow the direction of the slope. The

/334 cont./

312 water abounds during the rainy season. Then the stream beds, dry during the summer (ravines), swell disproportionately. During the summer months, the scarcity of water is still a serious problem.

3/3 In areas where water is scarce, there is also a scarcity of firewood, owing to the intensive deforestation. As the felling of the trees moves out from the populated centers of Tierradentro, the acquisition of this item becomes increasingly difficult. The fuel problem in Belalcázar, Cuetando, Chitoquez, Valencia,

[314] and Guadualejo is becoming increasingly serious. Furthermore, [439] charcoal is neither used nor produced for trade in Tierradentro.

[312] Providing firewood for feeding the hearth, as well as water, [462] is more an activity for women and children than for men. In most of the parcialidades, firewood abounds, and ordinarily each dwelling has sufficient reserves to maintain the fire on the hearth. In cold parcialidades, such as Calderas and Lame, re-viving the fire through the night is essential for protection [513] against the cold. The natives sleep around the hearth, from which comes the warmth that they need for sleeping, since they use no covering other than the clothing on their own bodies and no mattress other than a hard cowhide.

376 The abundance of water also facilitates the construction of
● 252 hydraulic mills, in order to utilize this motive force. They are relatively numerous.

Property

423 The lands of the native communities are protected. That is to say, they belong to the parcialidad. They are inalienable. In addition, they are exempt from taxes. This peculiarity of our legislation has fortunately permitted the preservation of the [311] Paez group and their culture. The lands contained within the parcialidades are uncultivated, usable, /335/ or in use. The uncultivated lands of the communities of Tierradentro are rapidly being colonized.

In each parcialidad there is a specific amount of land that belongs to all the members of the community. It is communal
land.